



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## **“TEXAS SYNDICATE” STREET GANG MEMBER ARRESTED IN DONNA** *Gang member has extensive felony record*

MCALLEN, Texas — A member of the violent “Texas Syndicate” street gang was arrested Tuesday by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents after they received information from the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Heriberto Rocha-Martinez, 54, from Mexico, was previously deported June 1. He now faces criminal charges for re-entering the U.S., which is a felony punishable by up to 20 years in prison. The case was accepted by the U.S. Attorney’s office for prosecution.

“Illegal aliens who seek to threaten the safety of our communities, such as members of violent street gangs, will be sought out and deported,” said Jerry Robinette, deputy special agent-in-charge for the ICE San Antonio office. “The continuing partnership we have with our local law enforcement partners provides us with the information we need to disrupt and dismantle these violent gangs.”

Rocha-Martinez’ criminal history began in January 1997 when he was convicted in the 275<sup>th</sup> Judicial Court in Hidalgo County for theft. He was sentenced to two years confinement. Shortly after re-entering the country illegally, he committed a string of crimes ranging from possessing narcotics to insurance fraud. Rocha-Martinez was convicted on both offenses and sentenced to two years of confinement, which was probated to five years community supervision.

This arrest is the latest law enforcement action under Operation Community Shield, a nationwide ICE anti-gang initiative to disrupt, dismantle and assist in criminally prosecuting violent gangs by employing the full range of law enforcement authorities available to ICE.

ICE kicked off Operation Community Shield in February by specifically targeting MS-13, which is one of the most violent street gangs in the country. ICE expanded the initiative in May to include all criminal street gangs and prison gangs with foreign-born members. To date, ICE has arrested more than 1,715 gang members under this national initiative.

ICE uses its unique immigration authorities (both criminal and administrative) against gang members, as well as its customs authorities in targeting gang-related narcotics smuggling, gun smuggling, money laundering, and in seeking the forfeiture of illegally derived assets.

To report suspicious activity, members of the public should call the ICE hotline at 1-866-DHS-2ICE.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*